

## Check out KNWR opportunities at Peninsula Sportsman Show

*by Mark Chase*

This past weekend, the Great Alaskan Sportsman's Show was held in Anchorage at the Sullivan and Ben Boeke Arenas. Thousands of Alaskans, not only from Anchorage but from many parts of the State, dropped by to wander the aisles of vendor displays and attend seminars on topics ranging from fly-tying to log home building.

Vendor booths included, among others, retailers, fishing and hunting guides, charter operators, and local, state and federal groups and agencies. There were even credit and loan companies on hand for those who maybe found more than they anticipated. Chances were, if you had a question about fishing, hunting, or other forms of Alaska outdoor recreation, there was someone in the building who had an answer.

Next weekend, the Kenai Peninsula hosts our very own sportsman's show at the Soldotna Sports Center. While the show is not of the same magnitude as the Anchorage show, it does showcase the Peninsula community with respect to vendors, groups, and agencies. The Show is a wonderful opportunity for the sporting (whatever outdoor sport that may be) community of the Kenai Peninsula to get together and get excited about the upcoming, and all too brief, peak recreational season on the Kenai.

As in Anchorage, the Kenai National Wildlife

Refuge will have a staffed booth to discuss recreational opportunities and issues related to the Kenai NWR. Refuge managers, rangers, biologists, and educators will be available to discuss issues important to you about Refuge.

With the passage of the National Wildlife Refuge Improvement Act of 1997, co-sponsored by our own Congressman Don Young, fishing, hunting, and other wildlife dependant recreational activities are now priority public uses for not only the Kenai Refuge, but for all National Wildlife Refuges in the country.

It is the intent of the Refuge to manage the land and uses of the land in such a manner as to be able to provide these quality recreational opportunities for generations to come.

So, while you're wandering the aisles in search of that new rod and reel, backpack or boat, stop by the Kenai Refuge booth and let's talk about the great places on the Peninsula to put your new outdoor garb and gadgets to their intended use.

Believe it or not, it has to break-up sometime, and ultimately spring will come to the Kenai. Until then, "A little more ice fishing, anyone?"

*Mark Chase is the Deputy Refuge Manager at the [Kenai National Wildlife Refuge](#). He and his wife Julie and two children have lived in Soldotna for five years.*